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these examples to have no effect? What is to hinder the people of England from calling a convention; from meeting in convention; from amending the constitution, in convention; from districting the country into parliamentary districts, in convention? They are not fit for such a government, you say. We reply, no change in the government is proposed. If the English people give, in fact, that sanction, which is now supposed to be given, in theory, to their present system, it will go on. If they will not sanction it, they are fit for the change, and they will have the change. They ought to have it. The government party in England do not rest their cause on the ground, that England is not ripe for giving every man a vote, but on the ground that things are best as they are; that a government, as now organised, of king, lords, and commons, is best in itself. This, we in America do not believe; this, nobody in England believes, but those kings, lords, and *soi disant* commons, who are parties to the controversy. They are a numerical minority, the commons being falsely so called. They are a physical minority, and an intellectual minority. At present they seem to possess the greater part of the wealth of the country, and by this they subsist. As much of this wealth rests on the faith, by which the national debt is supported, it could stand the first day of a serious awakening in the nation; and there is really, therefore, no strong obstacle to oppose the reorganisation of England, on purely popular and republican principles. This done, an intimate cooperation with us would follow, and in the general result, it is not too much to say, not only that Europe would be regenerated, but that the empire of civilisation might again be pushed into Africa and Asia.

ART. VII.—*Journal of a Residence and Travels in Colombia, during the Years 1823 and 1824.* BY CAPTAIN CHARLES STUART COCHRANE, of the Royal Navy. 2 Vols. 8vo. London. 1825.

THE progress of South America in the career of revolution, independence, and liberty, is among the remarkable phe-

nomena of the present age, and supplies a page in the history of man, rich with facts of high and novel import, from which the wise and benevolent may receive equal instruction and pleasure. The enlightened statesman will find his brightest anticipations more than realised, and the friend of human kind will contemplate with delight, a march of improvement in the social, intellectual, and political condition of his race, which no records of previous history have taught him to expect. A tyranny so shameless in its aggressions on the rights of man, so iniquitous and selfish in its motives, and so desolating in its action, as that whose iron arm was stretched over Spanish America, from the bloody era of the conquest down to the beginning of the present century, has never been known at any period of the world, whether civilised or barbarous. Chateaubriand spoke without metaphor, when he said, that ‘for every dollar spent in Europe, tears of blood flow in the abysses of the earth in America.’ That the day should arrive, when such oppression would be resisted, and a just retribution fall on the heads of the oppressors, was to be expected, but that the struggles of the sufferers should be crowned with successes so speedy and permanent, was more than the most sanguine could have ventured to predict, or even hope.

Within the short space of fifteen years, all Spanish America has shaken off the chains of its servitude, and new and independent governments have been established. The countries, which have respectively instituted separate governments of their own, are Mexico, Guatamala, Colombia, Peru, Chile, and Buenos Ayres. Nature seems to have marked out these divisions, and it is most likely that they will for the present at least remain fixed. Brazil enjoys a sort of anomalous independence, having dissolved its connexion with the old dynasty of Portugal, and set up a government of its own, under a constitution, and the new emperor Don Pedro, who, in his proclamation to the Brazilians published a year ago, bravely bid defiance to the ‘Jacobinical and Machiavellian Cortes of Portugal.’ This is of course a temporary state of things. The atmosphere of America is not one, which can ever be breathed freely by kings and emperors; crowns will not sit lightly here, and the fate of Iturbide should be a warning to all, who are ambitious of so hazardous a distinction. The experi-

ment of the last fifteen years, which was begun indeed fifty years ago by the United States, has solved to a demonstration the great problem in politics, respecting the capability of men in a given state of society to govern themselves. Aloof from the governments of the old world, and too remote to be encumbered and crushed by the officious aid of a Holy Alliance, or a jealous neighbor, the South Americans have fought their way to independence; and, notwithstanding they were just emerging from a state of pupillage and degradation, so feelingly described by Bolivar, in his excellent speech at the opening of the Congress of Cúcuta, they have nevertheless shown themselves adequate to every exigency. Wisdom has prevailed in their deliberations, and they have been firm, prompt, and persevering in action. Reverses have only roused them to new and more vigorous efforts, and experience has taught them lessons, by which they have not disdained to be instructed and guided.

We do not mean to say, that there have not been civil commotions, tumults, and factions, errors of judgment on one part, and want of principle on another, contests of ambition, interest, passion, ignorance; all these have shown themselves perpetually, and in various forms, and it is no wonder that they should; but it may be affirmed, that the spirit of justice, intelligence, and virtue has triumphed, and it must moreover be allowed, that the praise of the triumph is in proportion to the obstacles encountered and overcome. In some of the republics there will doubtless be further changes, and perhaps civil discords, but the Rubicon is passed, the conflict between despotism and liberty is at an end. Disputes concerning the safest depositories of power, and the best machinery of government, will arise, constitutions will require to be amended to suit the growing intelligence of the people, and improvement of society. Such differences, when confined to discussions, or even to sharp collisions of party, will do good, by quickening the spirit of inquiry, and diffusing a knowledge of political science. The recent able articles in the *Nacional*, published at Buenos Ayres, going into a full examination of the principles of a new constitution proposed for the government, cannot fail to exercise an important influence in preparing the minds of the people for a salutary change. The freedom, and even warmth, with which all

kinds of political topics have been discussed in the papers of Bogotá and Caracas, has no doubt contributed very much to the successful establishment of the constitution and laws of Colombia. Who knows how much we are indebted to the essays of the Federalist, and the newspaper wars of that day, for our own Union and the adoption of the constitution? The light elicited by these contests of intellect and opinion, enabled the people gradually to distinguish sound principles from false, and prepared them to incline to the better side. We look for the same results, although by a slower process, in the rising states of South America.

The Republic of Colombia has succeeded in attaining a better organisation, than any other of the new states, and, both from the comparative stability of its government, and its great commercial importance, it holds out many objects of interest to the rest of the world. The public seems in a fair way to be fully informed of everything pertaining to this country. Four books of travels in Colombia, and some of them of respectable dimensions, have been published within the last year, three in London, and one in Paris. Our readers must not imagine, however, that the love of adventure, which operates with a charm so magical and resistless on many minds, which carried Ledyard from one end of the world to the other, and hurried Park to an untimely grave in the heart of Africa, has been the ruling motive with all these travellers; nor that, like Thales, Solon, Plato, and other sages of antiquity, they wandered abroad to study the laws, and gather up the fruits of the wisdom and knowledge of other countries. Our adventurers went not out in pursuit of shadowy things like these, but were mainly bent on the more substantial objects of mercantile enterprise and speculation. The Frenchman, M. Mollien, ought perhaps to be excepted from this remark, for it does not appear from his book,* that he had any other motive, than to please himself, and go home and tell what he had seen.

Captain Charles Stuart Cochrane, of the Royal Navy, informs us in his preface, that he visited Colombia with the view of securing an exclusive privilege for the pearl fishery, having previously devised certain ‘new expedients,’ by which

* *Voyage dans la République de Colombia, en 1822 et 1823; par G. Mollien. Paris, 1824.*

the divers might be protected from the sharks and other voracious fishes, which infest the seas in those parts, where the pearls are to be found. After obtaining from the Admiralty leave of absence for two years, he sailed for the West Indies, and at length landed on Terra Firma at Laguayra. He made a short excursion to Caracas, thence returned to Laguayra, and sailed to Santa Martha, ascended the river Magdalena in a boat to Honda, from which place he passed up by land to Bogotá, the capital of Colombia. On his return he crossed the Andes at Ibagué, Cartago, and Novita to the head of the river Atrato, which he descended to the bay of Chocó, and thence sailed along the coast to Cartagena and Santa Martha, at which latter place he took passage for Jamaica.

The events of this tour the author dilates into a journal of two thick octavos, without the least apparent compunction for so heavy a draft on the purse and patience of his readers. He has, moreover, adorned his work with pictures drawn after nature, and beautifully colored. One of the most imposing of these is the frontispiece, exhibiting the traveller himself at full length, leaning pensively with his right arm on a mule, and gaudily dressed in what he calls the costume of the country. But although too diffuse, and carrying with it too much of the air of bookmaking, the narrative is not wholly without interest. The author's ill stars lead him into more disasters and hardships, than commonly fall to the lot of travellers, to all of which he contrives to submit with becoming and cheerful resignation. He notes down the results of his observations and experience with spirit and good humor; but few readers, we apprehend, will have the resolution to keep him company to the end of his book, or to follow him through the ambages of his descriptions, without occasional symptoms of weariness.

From Santa Martha, Captain Cochrane went on horseback to Cienega, a distance of about twentyseven miles, from which place there is a water communication to Baranquilla on the Magdalena, where he was to commence his voyage up the river. This short tour was not without its adventures. While fording a small stream, in which the water was breast high to his horse, a *peon*, or native Indian of the country, suddenly made his appearance from a thicket, and accosted

our traveller and his companion. It was night, and the salutation of the savage was not the more grateful to suspicious ears, by coming on the wings of darkness. *Vaya vm. con Dios*, cried our author, putting his Spanish for once, as he believed, to good use, 'go away, and God be with you.' The obtrusive Indian disappeared, and the travellers soon found themselves in comfortable quarters, at the hospitable mansion of the good curate of Cienega. The next morning they rode about a league to Pueblo Viejo, whence they passed in a canoe to Solidad, near Baranquilla.

At this place they arrived on the 25th of March, and were detained nearly a week on account of the feast days, which happened at that season. Nobody would work during the feast days, in fitting out a boat, and no *bogas*, or boatmen, could be employed. On the third of April the equipage was ready, and no wonder it should take a week even of good working time, and with the labor of all the *bogas* of Baranquilla and Solidad, to prepare it, if it accorded with the following description of a travelling apparatus in Colombia, as given in the author's own words.

'To travel in this country,' says he, 'it is necessary to have a small bedstead, so constructed as to be easily taken to pieces, with a *toldo* or covering of tolerably strong linen or blue check, in order to keep out the mosquitoes and small sand flies; the threads of a common mosquito net, as used in Barbadoes, not being sufficiently close to prevent the sand flies from entering. These are to be procured at Solidad, though roughly made. Pillows, sheets, and blankets should be brought from Europe, as they are here very dear and bad. The bedstead and toldo cost only fifteen dollars, which is reasonable. I paid rather more, having persuaded the workmen, who are excessively lazy, to work on feast day, to which they are ordinarily very averse. The traveller should likewise procure two or three dresses of Holland sheeting, with feet of the same material, instead of stockings; the jacket loose and buttoned to the throat. The white does not attract the sun, and feels cool and agreeable, is easily washed, and will dry expeditiously by being laid on the toldo. Two straw hats are necessary; the one for lying down in the canoe, the other for various occasions; both should have broad brims. Shoes of strong holland with leather soles are most easy and agreeable to the feet, and a pair of English shooting shoes for landing in the mud. A saddle with holsters is requisite; a sword, dirk, pair of pocket pistols, a hammock to recline in during the day, two good mats, one to lie on in the

canoe, the other fitted to the sacking of the bed, to prevent the mosquitoes from penetrating at night,—are amongst other needful precautions. All wine, tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, and salt, besides dried beef, hams, tongues, live fowls, eggs, and biscuits, with plenty of *tocino* or cured pork fat for frying eggs, should be laid in at this place, together with a sufficient stock of plantains and dried salt meat for the bogas, who are fed, as well as paid, by the traveller, and who, notwithstanding their abstemiousness at home, devour an astonishing quantity of provisions when living at the expense of others. The requisite cooking utensils are a large copper chocolate pot, a copper vessel for making soup, another for hash and stews, a third flat one for frying eggs, two block tin plates, three dishes, two tin cups for drinking, and a small tin measure for serving spirits to the bogas, who will not work well without a dram each morning of the anise of the country, of which a jar or two must be provided, so as to supply them throughout the journey. Knives, forks, spoons, and small duck table cloths, about a yard square, must not be forgotten.’ Vol. I. pp. 86—88.

This is a most formidable array of requisites, and if they are all indeed as essential, as the writer would seem to imply, it is quite evident that a voyage round the globe, whether toward the rising or the setting sun, is a trifling thing compared with an expedition up the Magdalena, in a *toldo* canoe poled by *bogas*. We cannot but think, however, that the author’s catalogue of necessities is much more ample, than any urgency in the case demands. The French *voyageur* above mentioned, who passed up the river from nearly the same place only two months before, makes no such provision for his wants. The work of preparation began in the morning, and by five o’clock, he says, everything was in readiness for his departure,—à cinq heures tous mes effets étaient à bord de ma frêle embarcation. He complains, it is true, that the voyage was tedious and long, *fort pénible et fort longue*, but hints not that his sufferings were in any way increased, by a want of suitable bed furniture, changes of apparel, or cooking utensils. In short, it will appear on this, as well as on other occasions, that our author’s ideas of comfort are not precisely those of a man, who had passed many of his days in the midst of nature’s solitudes. M. Mollien had sailed on the waters of the Senegal, and slept in the forests of Africa, he had heard the howlings of wild beasts in their native haunts, and had learnt to endure existence as a

very tolerable boon, even when deprived of many of the luxuries of civilised life.

We at length find Captain Cochrane embarked on the Magdalena with his companion, in a canoe poled by four *bogas*, and another at the stern with a paddle. From the mouth of this river, to the head of boat navigation at Honda, is a distance of about 550 miles. The current is rapid, and a progress of ten leagues in ascending is called a good day's journey. Many necessary delays occur on the way, and the voyage is seldom performed in less than a month. Captain Cochrane had infinite trouble with his *bogas*, some running away, others feigning sickness, and others becoming obstinate and refusing to work. These evils he ascribes to a want of a proper code of laws to govern this class of men, and to the custom of paying them before their departure. He says their number on the banks of the river is nearly ten thousand. Their great place of residence is Monpox, where those taken at the outset are commonly discharged, and others employed for the remainder of the voyage. The elements seemed also to conspire against him; thunder showers were incessant, and he was almost daily drenched in rain; the mosquitoes were merciless in their attacks, and heeded not the thick leather dress, which he procured on the way, in addition to his formidable outfit; alligators paid him very unseasonable and uncereemonious visits; and venomous serpents lurked in the branches of trees overhanging the river, ready to dart upon an unsuspecting victim. With all these calamities, and many others untold, to worry and detain him, it is no wonder that he was doomed to the lingering passage of fortysix days from Baranquilla to Honda. The more fortunate Frenchman performed the same in less than thirty days.

The author relates several rather marvellous anecdotes about alligators. It is very rare, he says, for them to attack any of the human species, but when one has made the experiment, and tasted human flesh, he becomes ravenous after that food, and is a terror to all those, who dwell in the neighborhood of his haunts. He is then called *cayman bravo*, and the natives feel no security, till they have joined in a body, and made war upon this foe of human life, and accomplished his destruction; much in the same way as the

good people of Pomfret leagued themselves with General Putnam, to pursue and destroy the famous she wolf, that committed such havoc in the sheep folds of that town and vicinity. The *cayman bravo* frequently amuses himself by lying in a listless posture on the sandy margin of the river, when the natives surround him in a body, armed with muskets and javelins, and commence their attack with such caution and fury, as to overcome the unsuspecting enemy. At other times the alligator is more guarded; seemingly conscious of the hostility existing between him and the human race, he seldom appears on the beach, but seeks for a quiet retreat at the bottom of the river. The natives pursue him even here, and their mode of operation is thus described by the author. 'They select an opportunity when the water is clear, and drop quietly down the river, until they arrive over the spot where the alligator lies, when one of the boldest and most experienced divers leaves the canoe, with a *lazo* in his hand, dives to the bottom, places himself by his side, and tickles him under his throat, which causes him to lift his head without opening his eyes, at which moment the diver slips the noose over his head, and instantly reascends to the surface. No sooner does he appear, than the noose is hawled taught, and the end is handed on shore; the whole party land, and the moment the animal is thus brought to the water's edge, they despatch him with firearms, and javelins, called by them *matteculebras*.' It is proper to add, that the author did not see this exploit performed, although he had the account from such sources, that he considers it entitled to implicit credit.

The food of the alligators is chiefly fish, but they devour water fowl, and have a treacherous practice of seizing their victims, 'by rising suddenly under them and pulling them down by the legs.' This reminds us of the Chinese mode of catching ducks, mentioned by Buffon. The duck catcher ascertains a place, in a small lake or still creek, where a flock is in the habit of swimming apparently for amusement, an hour or two each day. In this place he sets afloat several calabashes, or gourds, the company of which on their first return the ducks do not seem to relish; but seeing no harm done, their shyness gradually wears off, and at length they swim among the calabashes with perfect unconcern. When

this degree of familiarity is attained, the duck catcher puts a large calabash over his head, with holes for his eyes, and wades gently into the water, with his head only above the surface, till he finds himself in the midst of the ducks, when he commences the same ungracious mode of assault as the alligators, and continues to draw them under water by the legs, till he can secure no more to the girdle fastened for the purpose around his waist. The next day he resorts again to the same stratagem, and with similar success.

But we should never come to an end, if we were to dilate on all the particulars of our author's eventful voyage up the Magdalena. As Honda is the head of navigation, through which all imported goods, that are brought up the river, pass to the capital, it has a custom house. At this place, also, it is usual for travellers to sell their canoe, or *champan*, to merchants for freight down the river. The country around the town is picturesque and beautiful, and the distant view is terminated by lofty mountains. Honda is somewhat more than sixty miles from Bogotá, and the mode of travelling is on mules, over a broken road, and at times through a fertile and cultivated country.

After setting us safely down in the capital of Colombia, the author comes no more to our notice for a long time, but betakes himself in earnest to writing a history of the new Republic. This is comprised in four chapters of his work, and constitutes nearly two thirds of the first volume. It is loosely written, but is perhaps as good a historical account as any within the same compass, and coming down to the present time. We allow it this praise, however, mainly on the consideration of its being almost a literal transcript from a valuable work entitled, *Outline of the Revolution in Spanish America*, published in 1817. Down to that period, Captain Cochrane has condescended to copy this work, without venturing to deviate often from the precise language of his original. So far his judgment may be commended, and it would have been creditable to his candor, if he had anywhere hinted to his readers, that he was exhibiting himself to them in a borrowed garb. This he has not done, and we leave him to settle the charge of egregious plagiarism with the publishers of the work, from which he has pillaged so bountifully. This *Outline* may be looked upon, as a book of

authority, respecting the revolutionary history of South America, till the date of its publication. The materials were supplied by intelligent South Americans, then resident in London, and they are put together with literary skill and judgment. For the last eight years there is no good history of South American affairs. The compilations that have been made by travellers are meagre, disconnected, and frequently inaccurate. The work published in London, two years and a half ago, entitled *Colombia*, in two cumbersome octavo volumes, seems to have been designed to promote certain commercial projects, connected in some way with Mr Zea's loan, and cannot be regarded as authority, any farther than it professes to be indebted to authors of known credit. The geographical, statistical, and commercial accounts are chiefly taken from Depons and Humboldt; the history is transcribed from the 'Outline,' to the year 1817, and afterwards hastily collected from the common sources. The volumes contain several important and interesting public documents. There are some well written notices of revolutionary events in the *Biblioteca Americana*, recently published in London. Mr Restrepo, the present able and learned secretary of the Home Department in Colombia, is understood to be engaged in writing a history of the revolution. From his known ability, his zeal in the cause, and his perfect acquaintance with the subject, high expectations may justly be entertained of the success of his undertaking.*

The Republic of Colombia is composed of the countries formerly known, as the captain generalcy of Venezuela, and the viceroyalty of New Granada. Its extent from the mouth of the Orinoco, to the western extremity of Panamá, in a direct line, is somewhat more than 1300 miles; and from Cape Vela on the north, to the southern limits of Quito on the south, it is about 1100 miles. By an estimate founded on Humboldt's astronomical observations, Venezuela contained 48,000 square leagues, and New Granada, including

* Mr Restrepo's Reports to Congress concerning the internal state of Colombia, and particularly that of 1823, are documents of great value, evincing not more an intimate knowledge of the internal relations, wants, and prospects of his country, than a general enlargement and cultivation of mind. There is a valuable article written by him, entitled *Descripcion de la Provincia de Antioquia*, and contained in the second volume of the *Seminario del Nuevo Reyno de Granada*, printed at Bogotá, in the year 1809.

Quito, 65,000. According to this estimate the present superficies of Colombia, exclusive of Panamá, is 1,017,000 square miles, being twelve times larger than the Island of Great Britain, and about the dimensions of the whole territory of the United States east of the Mississippi. It is bounded on the north and east by the Carribean sea and the Atlantic ocean, on the south by the Brazils and Peru, and on the west by the Pacific and the new republic of Guatamala. Reckoning from the mouth of the Orinoco to the Isthmus of Darien on the Atlantic side, and from Panamá to the borders of Peru on the Pacific, it will be found that Colombia has a seacoast of little less than 3000 miles in extent. When we consider the central position of this country, in regard to other parts of the American continent, and also to Europe and Asia; when we take into view its geographical features, its large and numerous rivers, its varied soil and climate, its mountains, and forests, and luxuriant valleys, its products and natural resources, its pearl fisheries and rich mines; when we look at these immense advantages, enjoyed under a free government suited to convert them all to their proper ends, and to ensure a perpetually increasing prosperity, we cannot but be impressed with the grandeur to which it must ultimately arise, and the elevated rank it is destined to hold in the family of nations.

The present government of Colombia is founded on principles, nearly resembling those of our own constitution. It is a representative system, having a Congress of two Houses, and an elective President. It differs in two important respects from the fundamental principles of the constitution of the United States; the first is in regard to the mode of elections, and the second in the administration of government in the *departments*, or what we should call the states. The right of suffrage is somewhat curtailed, by making it necessary for every voter to possess a small amount of property, or to exercise some trade, or liberal profession. The people do not vote in the first instance for representatives, but for electors, by whom the senators and representatives are chosen. By a law of Congress passed June 25th, 1824, the Republic is divided into 12 departments, embracing 37 provinces, and 230 cantons. These cantons are further subdivided into pa-

rishes, each of which holds what is called a parochial assembly on a stated day, once in four years, and at these assemblies the electors are chosen by the persons duly qualified to be voters. A representative to congress is assigned to a population of 30,000, and also each *province* is entitled to another representative, when there is a fraction of more than 15,000. The number of electors for each representative is 10, and if the population of the Republic be taken at 2,600,000, which is thought a fair estimate, the whole number of electors will not be less than 860. The number of representatives would accordingly be 86. But in fact both the electors and representatives exceed these numbers, because in case of an additional representative for a fraction, there is a full number of electors, for each fraction, although a less amount of population. On this new division of the Republic, it is supposed the number of representatives will be 95. The senate is established by the constitution to consist of 4 senators from each department, making 48 in the whole. These electors meet once in four years, in the capitals of their respective provinces, and execute the very important duty of choosing on the same day, the President of the Republic, the Vice President, the Senators, and Representatives. The votes are sent up to the congress, where they are scrutinised in the manner pointed out by the constitution. The President and Vice President are elected for four years, and no person can be chosen president more than twice in succession. The representatives are chosen for four years, and the senators for eight. The term of office for one half of the Senate expires at the end of every fourth year, so that only two senators from each department are chosen at the periodical elections.

But the most remarkable deviation in the constitution of Colombia from that of the United States, is the feature by which the government is made a *central*, instead of a *federative* system. The *Departments* exercise no functions of government within themselves, but are under the control of an Intendant, who is nominated by the president; and the *Provinces* are likewise subject to governors appointed in the same way. The powers of these officers are prescribed by the laws of congress, and the same laws apply to all the departments, provinces, and cantons. This was a favorite

project with Bolivar, and it was undoubtedly a wise one, under the circumstances in which the new constitution was adopted. In the year 1811, delegates from the provinces of Venezuela, namely, Margarita, Merida, Cumaná, Varinas, Barcelona, Truxillo, and Caracas, assembled in a general congress at Caracas, declared their independence, and on the 21st of December of that year, ratified a constitution, which was designed to bind them together in a confederacy, bearing a close resemblance to that of the United States. In that state of civil discord, and external hostility, the plan did not succeed. The provinces, which were ravaged or threatened by the enemy, were obliged to look to their own safety, and turn all their resources into channels for their own protection. The consequence was, that the general congress had neither power nor resources to execute its measures for the defence of the union ; it became an inefficient body, and was at length dissolved. A military government succeeded, which at last centred in Bolivar as dictator, and it was not till 1819, after a series of almost unparalleled struggles in the fields of war and death, that the people had leisure to think of reforming their civil institutions.

A congress was assembled at Angostura, in Venezuela, where, on the 17th of December, of the last mentioned year, the fundamental law was published, which united Venezuela and New Granada into one state, to be denominated the *Republic of Colombia*. A committee was appointed to draft a constitution, which was adopted on the 30th of August, 1821, by the general congress assembled at Rosario de Cúcuta, and is the same which has been in operation till the present time. Its proudest eulogy is, perhaps, that for the space of four years, the government has been administered under it with great firmness and regularity, and with the present prospect of entire success. The time is not likely to come, when it will have more serious difficulties to encounter, than have already been surmounted. We forbear to remark further at present on the constitution of Colombia, as we intend to embrace an early opportunity to give a brief sketch of its history, its principles, and its practical operation. Considering the institutions that may be expected to grow up under it, and the wide influence it must necessarily have in forming the character of a large and thriving population

of one of the finest portions of the earth, it becomes a subject worthy of the interest and inquiry of every liberal mind. The great drawback on the favorable action of any constitution in South America, is the existence of the laws of old Spain, fitted only to be instruments of degradation and imbecility, but which are so closely entwined with the character and feelings of the people, that any violent attempts to eradicate their influence would be equally dangerous and ineffectual. They must be removed gently, and by a succession of new statutes wisely adapted to the purpose, and cautiously administered. The Colombians date their independence from the declaration at Caracas, in 1811, to which we have above alluded. The names of the twelve departments, into which the republic is divided, are the following, Orinoco, Venezuela, Apure, Zulia, Boyacá, Cundinamarca, Magdalena, Cauca, Istmo, Ecuador, Asuay, Guayaquil. At the Congress of Cúcuta it was decided, that Bogotá should be the capital of the republic, and the place of the future assembling of congress, till a new town should be built for the purpose, and named *Bolívar*.

Our readers will doubtless be pleased with Captain Cochrane's description of the Congress Halls of Bogotá, and of some of the distinguished personages, who have made a figure in Colombian history, and are now at the head of government.

‘The meetings of the Senate,’ says he ‘are held in a long, but narrow and low hall, in the monastery of St Domingo; the centre is railed off for the members, extending from each side of the President's chair, in straight lines to the foot of the room, where the railing forms a horse shoe, leaving only sufficient space in most parts, for one row of spectators. At the head of the room, on a platform raised about three feet, is placed the President's chair, a fine, stately, ornamented piece of furniture, covered with crimson and gold. In front is a table, ornamented with crimson-velvet, handsomely trimmed with gold lace, and a cushion of the same, with rich tassels; the steps leading to the chair are likewise covered with a cloth of crimson and gold. Over head is a canopy, decorated with silk hangings, and the arms of the republic fixed in front; the whole having a handsome appearance. From the foot of the platform extend two rows of chairs, for the use of the senators, gilt on the inside of the backs, and having the republican arms, and motto *Ser libre o morir*, ‘to be free or die.’ There are

also several small tables for papers to lie on, or affording materials and means for writing. About half way down on the left of the President, are the secretary's chair and table, with all the various papers to be read on each day. The room is white-washed, and allegorical figures in watercolors embellish the walls, representing Liberty, Justice, Plenty, &c. &c ; and on the right of the President, is a portrait of Bolivar, placed there by order of the congress.

'In the evening, the hall is lighted by lamps hung down the centre of the room. The President has a pair of silver candlesticks ; and any member that wishes may have candles on his small table ; but with all this, the hall requires to be better lighted, in order to produce greater effect.

'The senators are tolerably punctual in attendance, and when the President observes that a sufficient number have assembled, he rings a small bell, silence ensues, he mounts his chair, and the senators take their seats. There are no prayers, as in our English House of Commons, which is remarkable in a Roman Catholic country.

'The President desires the secretary to read over the transactions of the previous day, on which casual observations are made, and any requisite amendments or alterations adopted. This done, any matters declared urgent are read, introduced and discussed ; after which the business for the day, as it stands on the list, is read and commented on.'—

'There are two parties in the House, which is not the case in the Senate. They have obtained the names of the Mountain party, and the Valley party. The former, so named from being returned to serve in congress from the mountainous district, are chiefly priests, several of whom have been named according to the spot they come from ; such as Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, &c. &c ; and some of these names have not fallen badly on the individuals so designated. This is the smallest, but most illiberal party, and indeed carries no weight in the chamber. The liberal, or Valley party, so named from coming from the lower districts, is numerous, and not without priests, some of whom are men whose liberal sentiments would do honor to any country.

'There are some good speakers, but, taken as a whole, by no means equal to the Senate. I cannot forbear expressing my admiration at the general decorum observed in both houses. A stranger would never suppose that this was the *first* constitutional congress, everything being so very well, and orderly conducted, as to reflect the highest credit on the nation ; thus holding out a convincing proof to the world of what they will some day become.'

The author next takes us to pay his respects to the heads of the departments, concerning whom he speaks in the following language.

‘After mass [on Sunday] it is customary to pay a visit to the Vice-President, who holds a levee on this day, from twelve till two o’clock. There is no servant in attendance to announce you ; you merely walk up to the general, bow, and retire to the nearest vacant seat ; conversation then becomes general, easy, and unembarrassed. The Vice-President, General Santander, is above the middle height, strongly made, of a dark complexion, with penetrating black eyes ; he wears his hair very long, which, together with large whiskers and mustachios, gives him rather a stern appearance, though I have heard him mentioned in his military and public life as an agreeable man ; he is generally dressed in uniform, and sometimes appears in a sky-blue surtout, embroidered like a French marshal’s dress-coat ; he is an intelligent man, has a great deal of natural acuteness, and is particularly sedulous in his attention to the business of the state—in diplomatic writing he is said to shine.

‘General Francisco de Paulo Santander was born at Cúcuta, and educated at the college of Bogotá for the profession of the law, which he left to become a subaltern in the patriotic army of New Grenada ; and afterwards made one of the few Grenadians who followed Bolivar to the plains of Venezuela, in his fallen fortunes, when Morillo possessed himself of the kingdom of New Grenada.

‘His mother and sister (the latter now the wife of Colonel Briceno) remained in Bogotá, and on account of their patriotism were in very straitened circumstances, but were still enabled to give, from time to time, very important information to Santander, respecting the state of the kingdom. On the approach of the Patriots, they, becoming suspected, were obliged almost literally to bury themselves alive, to escape the fury of that horrible monster, the Viceroy Santano. From this state they were only released, by the entrance of the patriots, just in time for the son to receive the last breath of his patriotic mother, who had contracted an incurable disease from the dampness of her hiding place, and who declared that she was happy in having lived long enough to see her country free !

‘At the close of the successful campaign of 1819, General Santander was promoted to the rank of General of Division, and appointed Vice-President of New Grenada, or Cundinamarca, as it was then called, by General Bolivar, and was afterwards elected Vice-President of Colombia, by the Congress of Cúcuta ; both

which situations, by his talents and conduct, he has proved that he highly merited : and to his unparalleled exertions in supplying Bolivar with resources, under the most difficult circumstances, may be mainly attributed the glorious successes of Carababo and Pichincha,—the one giving liberty to Venezuela, the other freedom to Quito.’ Vol. ii. p. 90—93.

After visiting the Vice-President, the rules of etiquette make it necessary to bestow a similar compliment on the secretaries, and some of the chief members of the congress. In compliance with those rules, Captain Cochrane next presented himself to Señor Gual, Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

‘He is considered a man of talent, and has seen more of the world than the other ministers, having, I believe, visited Europe, and passed a considerable time in North America. He speaks the English language fluently ; appears to have employed the time he spent out of his country to the greatest advantage, and seems perfectly acquainted with the present state of his native land, its resources, and the means by which it may be improved, and rendered prosperous.

‘From thence I went to Senor Castillos, the Minister of Finance ; he is an elderly man, and has suffered materially, both in body and property, by the revolution. He has read much, and still dedicates much time to reading, notwithstanding his arduous and engrossing duties. He is possessed of extensive knowledge, and an easy flow of language. His house, of an evening, is the general rendezvous of the best informed people, and I have there passed many agreeable evenings, observing the progress of knowledge in this new state, and picturing in my “mind’s eye” the pitch of greatness to which it may be eventually elevated.

‘My next visit was to Senor Restrepo, Minister of the Home Department, a good-looking, well-educated, polite man, about forty, having the appearance of a gentleman in his dress and deportment. He has suffered much during the revolution, but is now placed in a situation where he is enabled to do much benefit. Even during the government of the Spaniards, he exerted himself greatly in the diffusion of knowledge, and in consequence, was bitterly persecuted on the breaking out of the revolution ; for, as increase of knowledge and desire of liberty go hand in hand, it was the policy of the Spaniards to repress all that might have a tendency to expand the mind, or enlighten the intellect, and to launch their vengeance on those persons, the influence of whose superior talent they dreaded, because they knew its power.’—‘He is particularly attentive to the duties of his public office, and extremely obliging in all his communications with

strangers. He is a native of the province of Antioquia, which appears to me, generally speaking, to yield many able and gentlemanly men.

‘This visit over, I betook myself to the Minister of War, Colonel Briceno Mendez. His appearance is highly prepossessing; he wears uniform; his dress handsome, without being gaudy; his manners good, and he is naturally anxious to please. He appears well informed, and is particularly attentive to the duties of his arduous post, having the direction of the naval, as well as military department, which, in these turbulent times, is a duty of no small responsibility, and requiring great personal exertion. Vol. ii. p. 93—97.

Colonel Mendez has recently resigned the office of Secretary at War, and General Soublette has been appointed to fill the vacancy.

But the most brilliant star in Colombian history, and indeed in the history of modern revolutions, is Bolivar. To whatever it may be ascribed, whether to accident, singular good fortune, the highest order of personal merit, or to all combined, Bolivar has raised himself to an eminent station in the list of successful heroes, and remarkable men. He was born at Caracas, about the year 1785, and is said to be descended from a family of distinction in that place. As a favor granted to very few of the native youths of South America, he was permitted to finish his studies at Madrid. He afterwards visited different parts of Europe, travelled in Italy, Germany, England, and France, and was on very intimate terms at Paris with Humboldt and Bonpland. He returned to Madrid, where he married the daughter of the Marquis of Ulstariz, and soon departed for his native country. His wife did not survive many years, and he has not been married a second time.

While yet in Europe, he had formed the design of devoting himself to the cause of South American independence, when the course of events should point to a suitable time; and as it happened, he arrived at Venezuela just as the standard of liberty was beginning to be unfurled there by Miranda and his associates. Bolivar was not entirely satisfied, however, with the general system of measures pursued by the patriot party, and he avoided taking any active part. He did not approve the new constitution, which the Congress of Venezuela had adopted at Caracas, and he declined a request to be united with Don Lopez Mendez on a mission to England,

designed to promote the interests of the government formed on the principles of this constitution.

But the time soon came when he felt it his duty not to be kept inactive by a mere difference of opinion; the constitution, as it is well known, did not succeed; the wars and disasters, which pressed immediately upon its adoption, proved its inefficiency, and dispelled the hopes, which its friends had entertained, of its power to concentrate the interests and the action of a scattered people, suffering under numerous privations, and engrossed with the necessary care of self defence in different parts. Bolivar perceived, that this was not a time to deliberate on theoretical schemes of government; he joined the army under Miranda, and engaged in the contest with a zeal and patriotism, that raised him to a speedy popularity and influence. From that day to this, his history is in the eyes of the world; it has been a succession of splendid achievements, which have gained for his name a merited place on the same tablet with that of Washington. The brightest records of ancient or modern fame have nothing prouder to offer. Time and future events must show, whether this hero of the South will complete the parallel with his illustrious model, which may thus far be run with so much seeming justice.

In some respects Bolivar's ultimate success has been remarkable. He was several times unfortunate in his early career as a soldier, and more than once his enemies in his own country, as well as those from abroad, triumphed over him. But it is one mark of a great mind to rise above defeat, and restore the confidence which ill success has weakened. His ambition has never been too strong for his integrity, and a sincere desire for his country's good. For a considerable period he was supreme dictator, with all the army at his command; but when a calm was in some degree restored, a congress convened, and a favorable prospect seemed to open, of establishing a solid basis of government, he voluntarily yielded up all his power, and insisted on returning to the rank of a private citizen. This was accordingly done, till he was rechosen by the new congress to be commander in chief of the army, under the constitution and the laws. Twice he has by mere accident escaped assassination. In the first instance the dagger, which was intended for him, was plunged into the heart of his secretary, who happened to be sleeping in the hammock usually occupied by himself.

Energy is the predominant trait of his character. His movements are always prompt, decisive, and rapid, and at the same time directed with so much discretion, that with a force frequently inferior in numbers and discipline to that of the enemy, he has been able to carry through a successful warfare with Morillo, Morales, Monteverde, and other of the most experienced Spanish generals. His generosity has been much praised; he gave his slaves their freedom, and is said to contribute a principal portion of the income of his estate, in affording relief to the widows and children of soldiers, who have lost their lives in battle. As a companion he is social and pleasant, temperate in his habits, abstemious in his diet, and drinks no spirituous liquor. His constitution has suffered by the severe trials, both of body and mind, which he has gone through. His speeches and addresses, which have been published, evince sound and practical views, and adaptation of purpose, rather than depth of thought or great intellectual resources. His celebrated speech at the opening of the Congress at Angostura, we suppose to be his most remarkable effort in this way, and that speech shows at least, that he had studied profoundly the history and principles of various forms of government, and had most seriously at heart the object of establishing that form, which should be best suited to secure the prosperity and happiness of his country.

Besides the persons already mentioned, as having stood in the foreground of Colombian independence, may be added the names of Sucre, Urdaneta, Bermudes, Paez, Montilla, Padilla. For the few hints, which we shall throw out concerning these persons, we shall rely chiefly on the authority of M. Mollien, who speaks from information obtained in the country.

Sucre, who has recently acquired fresh laurels as the hero of Ayachuco, where the great battle was fought that has liberated Peru, is yet hardly thirty years of age. His previous fame rested on the battle of Pitchincha, in Quito, which was also gained by him, and procured for him the station of commandant general for that department. Urdaneta is a native of Santa Fé, and distinguished for his bravery and affable, gentlemanly demeanor. He has been president of the Senate, but is in a declining state of health. Bermudes was born at Cumaná, and has from the beginning of the contest taken a

very active part for the independence of South America. He is about fifty years of age. Paez, so much known for his valor and the vigorous traits of his character, is a mulatto, and the troops with whom he has accomplished such feats of military prowess, are but half civilized, undisciplined, and of the same color as himself. His influence over his soldiers is surprising; he lives with them on terms of intimacy and equality, shares in their privations, amusements, and exercises, and at the same time, by the high example of his courage, and the native power and firmness of his mind, he commands a perfect respect and obedience.

Montilla formerly served in Spain, and it is said that he looked to the revolution as a means of augmenting his fortune. He resided for some time in this country, and is still recollected in the circles of Philadelphia, as is Señor Gual in those of Baltimore. Montilla is now governor of Cartagena; his influence is extensive, and it is supposed that he looks with no favorable eye on the towering ascendancy of Bolivar. He had early differences with Miranda and Bolivar, which do not seem to have redounded much to his disinterestedness or patriotism. He must be allowed, however, to have fought bravely and successfully, and to have done much to aid the progress of the revolution. Padilla is a mulatto; at the beginning of the contest he was a pilot of Cartagena; he has been the artificer of his own good fortune, and his fame is built on important and well directed services. To the larger portion, indeed, of the distinguished South American chiefs, not less than to Bonaparte's Marshals, may be applied the language of Don Quixote, that 'each one is the son of his own works,' *cada uno es hijo de sus obras*. All the generals here mentioned, and who are now left far behind by Bolivar, says M. Mollien, 'seem rather to be his equals, than his subalterns; and in case of his death, or even defeat, it is not impossible that they might put themselves at the head of the party, which they have attached to their interests. In this respect there is a strong resemblance between Bolivar and Alexander. Paez with his negroes will occupy the plains; Montilla, Caracas; Padilla, the coasts; Sucre, Quito. Thus everything depends on the existence of Bolivar.' Such forebodings, by the way, appear to us without foundation. The conduct of these leaders has not been such, as to warrant suspicions of this sort, nor is it just to their past

characters to suppose, that they would in any event be guilty of the folly, or the crime, of sacrificing the safety and peace of their country, to the advancement of their own private aims. This would be to defeat the very object, for the attainment of which they have been contending, with so much zeal and bravery, for the last twelve years.

It may, indeed, safely be affirmed, that the prospects of the Colombians have never been so favorable as at this moment. Their foreign enemies have ceased, through weakness, to molest them; tranquillity prevails at home; the constitution has triumphed by an experiment of four years; salutary laws have been passed and published from time to time, and they go quietly into execution; the national credit is well established; the national resources are daily multiplying and becoming more efficient. Such has been the success at the outset of the new government, when experiments were to be tried, and obstacles innumerable to be met; when wars were to be carried on, and armies maintained; when the clamor of party was to be silenced, and the fire of ambition to be tempered and soothed. It is impossible to foresee what accident may bring to pass, but if successful experience is any pledge for future prosperity, it is reasonable to cherish the most encouraging anticipations of the growth and stability of the Colombian republic.

Commerce received a severe check during the revolutionary disturbances, and it is not surprising that it should not yet be restored even to its former channels. It is quite evident from the commercial laws and regulations, that the heads of the new government were not familiar with the principles, details, and bearings of this complicated subject; they were darkened and perplexed by the old system, and resorted to monopolies and restrictions. A revenue from commerce was absolutely necessary, and it was supposed that keeping up the old monopolies would be the most certain mode of obtaining it, since the people were accustomed to these restrictions, and would submit to them without complaint. If the government could make its own sales and purchases, and on its own terms, it was thought strange indeed, that it should not be able to secure the profits. Hence the ancient monopoly on tobacco was continued as a war tax. The consequence has been, that but a comparatively small amount of this article was produced, and it could not stand the competition of foreign tobacco, even

with a duty of fifty per cent on the latter. The next step was to prohibit importation altogether; then followed smuggling and customhouse frauds, and other devices to elude the laws, and of course to diminish the revenue, which a fair and judicious tariff might have ensured. Another extraordinary piece of legislation was that, which prohibited every kind of Spanish produce. This was meant to injure Spain, but no policy could be more shortsighted. Custom had made the cocoa of Colombia a necessary article of luxury to the Spaniards, and it was surely for the interest of the republic to give them the opportunity of obtaining as much as they could purchase and pay for, both on account of the present profit, and the importance of keeping open so good a market for the future. Again, a decree was issued by the Vice President, which required all foreign merchants trading in the country 'to consign themselves,' as it has been expressed, to the natives, a most singular mode of tempting foreign capital and enterprise to seek a residence in the country, where their influence is of such vital importance to the growth of the nation. It is proper to add, that the decree was not sanctioned by the congress. Several other strange specimens of legislation on this subject might be pointed out, which, as Colonel Hall has well remarked, might with propriety be entitled 'laws for the better security and increase of smuggling.' Knowledge and experience, however, will correct the evils, and it will be seen and felt, that the modern doctrine of *free trade with all nations*, in the most absolute sense of the term, is the only one consistent with a republican system, and that will in the shortest time ensure the highest degree of prosperity to a people.

Two laws in the Colombian code demand special notice, as fraught not more with justice, than a wise and liberal policy. The first relates to the emancipation of slaves, and the second to the establishment of schools, and the encouragement of letters. One of the earliest decrees of the constitutional congress was to abolish slavery. No person can be born a slave in Colombia, and the importation of slaves is prohibited by a severe penalty. Moreover, provision is made for creating a manumission fund by a tax, or legacy, which, according to the old Spanish laws of the colonies, was retained by the government. It is gratifying to learn, that this law goes into effect without opposition from any quarter. A large

number of slaves is annually redeemed by the proceeds of this fund; and to make the ceremony of manumission the more impressive and the more joyful, it takes place on the festival days in the month of December. A strict scrutiny is held by the highest magistrates, into the character of the slaves proposed to be redeemed, and those are selected, who are found to be the most worthy. It ought to be mentioned, also, that instances are frequent in which masters voluntarily give freedom to their slaves.

The law respecting schools was likewise passed by the constitutional congress at its first session, and it embraces provisions for primary schools, colleges, and universities. Mr Restrepo's Report shows, that the government were engaged in this work with great zeal three years ago. Numerous Lancastrian Schools, and a few seminaries of the higher order, have since been put in operation. A portion of the old ecclesiastical revenue is appropriated by law to this purpose, and especially the property of certain monasteries and nunneries. Good books and teachers are much wanted; but the foundation of the system is admirable, and it must ultimately succeed. As a further aid to the progress of knowledge, science, and the arts, all books in every language are allowed to be imported free of duty, and also maps, charts, philosophical instruments, engravings, paintings, statuary, collections of antiquities, busts, and medals. In short, if we look at the body of the Colombian laws, which have been passed under the new constitution, we shall find, that, notwithstanding occasional minor defects, they are in the main well considered, recognising all the great principles of a free and practical government, and aiming at the durable prosperity of the nation.